IN THE UNITED STATES

PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

APPLICANTS:	Mark C. Pace & Thomas W. Cook
APPLICATION NO.:	09/782,677
FILING DATE:	February 12, 2001
TITLE:	AUTOMATED SERVICE SCHEDULING SYSTEM BASED ON CUSTOMER VALUE
EXAMINER:	Jonathan G. Sterrett
GROUP ART UNIT:	3623
ATTY. DKT. NO.:	19538-05784

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APPEAL BRIEF

Real Party in Interest

The subject application is owned by Harrah's Operating Company, Inc., of Las Vegas,

Nevada.

Related Appeals and Interferences

There are no known related appeals or interferences that may directly affect, be directly

affected by, or have a bearing on the Board's decision in the pending appeal.

Status of Claims

Claims 1-75 stand finally rejected. On May 15, 2006, the appellants appealed from the final rejection of claims 1-75. The claims on appeal are set forth in an appendix attached hereto.

Status of Amendments

The appellants have not amended the claims since the final rejection.

Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

The claimed invention is directed at automating the servicing of customers located at various service locations in a business establishment. In one embodiment, a decisioning system (104) selects a primary service attendant (124) to provide service for a customer (122) at a service location (120) in a business establishment. (*See, e.g.*, ¶¶ 30, 126, and FIG. 2.) A paging system (106) then communicates a message to the selected service attendant (124). This message informs the service attendant (124) what event needs to be serviced at which service location (120) in the business establishment. The selected primary service attendant (124) responds with a page that indicates whether she accepts or declines to service the event. (*See, e.g.*, ¶¶ 31, 127-35, and FIG. 2.) This allows the selected service attendant (124) (who may be located anywhere in the business establishment) to go to the customer (122) and provide customer service at the service location (120) as needed. (*See, e.g.*, ¶ 147, and FIG. 2.) In this way, as events occur in various service locations (120) throughout a business establishment, the service attendants (124) can be efficiently dispatched according to a set of business rules to deal with the customers' needs as they arise.

An example of a structure corresponding to the claimed "communication means for communicating one or more events pertaining to a service event" (claim 23) and the claimed

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"means for transmitting . . . a message pertaining to an event" (claim 45) is the communication device (123). (*See, e.g.*, ¶ 34.)

An example of a structure corresponding to the claimed "decision making means . . . means for receiving the events" (23), "means . . . for scheduling the event" (45), and "means for selecting a first service attendant for servicing the scheduled event" (45) is the decisioning system (104). (*See, e.g.*, ¶ 30.)

An example of a structure corresponding to the claimed "messaging means . . . for transmitting a message to the primary service attendant" (23) and "means for transmitting a message to the first service attendant" (45) is the paging system (106). (*See, e.g.*, ¶ 31.)

An example of a structure corresponding to the claimed "message receiving means for receiving the message from the messaging means" (23) and "means for receiving the transmitted message" (45) are the message receivers (126). (*See, e.g.*, ¶ 31.)

Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal

Claims 1, 2, 7-10, 12-14, 17-21, 23, 24, 29-32, 34-36, 39-43, 45-47, 52-61, 66, 68-71, and 75 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,070,142 to McDonough et al.

Claims 3-6, 11, 22, 25-28, 33, 44, 48-51, 62-65, 67, 72, and 73 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as unpatentable over McDonough in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,257,981 to Acres et al.

Claims 15, 16, 37, 38, and 74 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as unpatentable over McDonough in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,003,013 to Boushy et al.

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Each of these rejections is improper because the cited references do not teach or suggest each of the limitations in the claimed subject matter, and because the proposed combinations are improper.

Argument

I.   McDonough does not disclose providing service to customers located at service locations in a business establishment. (Claims 1, 2, 7-10, 12-14, 17-21, 23, 24, 29-32, 34-36, 39-43, 45-47, 52-61, 66, 68-71, and 75)

To render a claim unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 102, a cited reference must disclose each and every limitation in the claim. *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of Cal.*, 814 F.2d 628, 631 (Fed. Cir. 1987); *see also* MPEP § 2131. Moreover, it is not sufficient merely to identify the claimed elements within the four corners of the reference. Not only must the claimed invention as a whole be disclosed, but those elements must also be "arranged as claimed" in that description. *In re Bond*, 910 F.2d 831, 15 USPQ2d 1566 (Fed. Cir. 1990). In the present case, McDonough does not disclose each and every feature as presented in claims 1, 2, 7-10, 12-14, 17-21, 23, 24, 29-32, 34-36, 39-43, 45-47, 52-61, 66, 68-71, and 75.

The claimed invention intelligently dispatches service attendants to customers located at various physical locations throughout a business establishment. Representative system claim 1, for example, recites a decisioning system that "schedule[es] a primary service attendant . . . for servicing each event" and a communication system that "indicat[es] the service location at which the event is to be serviced, where the indicated service location is in a business establishment." Representative method claim 46 recites "scheduling [an] event for servicing by a first service attendant" and "transmitting a message to the first service attendant identifying the service

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location to be serviced for the event, where the identified service location is in the business establishment." The other system and method claims contain similar limitations.

Specifically, each of the rejected claims requires at least: (1) that the customer be located at a service location, (2) that the service location be a location in a business establishment, and (3) that a service attendant be selected to provide service at the service location. Combining these requirements, the claimed invention requires that a service attendant be dispatched to the location in a business establishment where the customer is located. This condition is simply not met in McDonough's system, in which the purpose is to provide service by telephone to a customer from a call center that is remote from the customers.

McDonough describes a virtual call center for providing services to customers who request service from remote locations. Whereas the claimed invention provides services to customers at various service locations *in a business establishment*, McDonough is expressly directed to providing service to customers *at remote locations*. McDonough, col. 3, lines 18-21. This is a key distinction. Because McDonough's customers are not located at specific service locations in a business establishment, McDonough does not face the problem of dispatching service attendants to the various locations in a business establishment to service the events. Because of this fundamental difference, McDonough's system does not provide the claimed capability.

In the latest Office Action, the examiner sought to apply McDonough to the rejected claims. Specifically, the examiner first argued that McDonough's fax server (350), Web server (354), E-mail server (358), PC direct server (356) and kiosk (352) "are all customer service locations which can communicate one or more events pertaining to a service event." But the examiner also cited McDonough's employee work station (342) for the claimed "service location

at which the event is to be serviced." First, it makes little sense to say that the "customers" are located at the fax server, web server, e-mail server, etc. A customer sending an email message from his home computer cannot be said to be at the location of the e-mail server, within the context of the present application.

Another major problem with this mapping of McDonough to the claims is that is ignores the combined requirement that the service attendant be dispatched to the *same* service location in a business establishment where the customer is located. As the examiner acknowledged, the employee work station (342) is located in the call center. Although the call center may be considered a business establishment, the customers in McDonough are certainly not located in the call center; they are located remotely from it, at their homes, offices, etc. Regardless of what purported service locations are in McDonough, there is no question that McDonough does not dispatch service attendants to those locations .

In McDonough, therefore, there is no service location that is in a business establishment, where a customer is located, and to where a service attendant is dispatched by a message indicating the event and location to be serviced. For at least this reason, claims 1, 2, 7-10, 12-14, 17-21, 23, 24, 29-32, 34-36, 39-43, 45-47, 52-61, 66, 68-71, and 75 are novel over McDonough.

II.   McDonough combined with Acres or Boushy does not suggest providing service to customers located at service locations in a business establishment. (Claims 3-6, 11, 15, 16, 22, 25-28, 33, 37, 38, 44, 48-51, 62-65, 67, and 72-74)

To render a claim unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103, the prior art must disclose or suggest each and every limitation in the claim. *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071 (Fed. Cir. 1988) (reversing § 103 rejection because examiner ignored material claimed limitation that was absent from reference); *In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 981 (CCPA 1974); *see also* MPEP § 2143.03. The

examiner's obviousness rejection was improper because the suggested combinations of McDonough with Acres and with Boushy fail to disclose or suggest all of the limitations of the rejected claims.

Claims 3-6, 11, 22, 25-28, 33, 44, 48-51, 62-65, 67, 72, and 73 were rejected as unpatentable over McDonough in view of Acres, and claims 15, 16, 37, 38, and 74 were rejected as unpatentable over McDonough in view of Boushy. In making these obviousness rejections, the examiner expressly applied McDonough as in the § 102 rejection, and the additional reference (Acres or Boushy) was cited only for its disclosure of the additional dependent limitations.

As described in the previous section, McDonough fails to disclose a service location that is in a business establishment, where a customer is located, and to where a service attendant is dispatched by a message indicating the event and location to be serviced. Therefore, claims 3-6, 11, 15, 16, 22, 25-28, 33, 37, 38, 44, 48-51, 62-65, 67, and 72-74 are patentable over the combination of McDonough and either Acres or Boushy because of the deficiencies in McDonough identified in the previous section.

III.   Modifying McDonough to achieve the claimed invention would render McDonough's system unsuitable for its intended purpose. (Claims 15, 16, 37, 38, and 74)

In addition, it would not have been obvious to one of skill in the art to modify McDonough to achieve the claimed dispatching system. This is because such a modification would destroy a fundamental principle of operation of McDonough. In making an obviousness rejection, an examiner cannot propose a modification that renders the prior art unsatisfactory for its intended purpose. *In re Gordon*, 733 F.2d 900 (Fed. Cir. 1984); MPEP § 2143.01. Because

the examiner seeks to modify McDonough's virtual call center to achieve the claimed dispatching system, the examiner violates this rule.

In the rejection of claims 15, 16, 37, 38, and 74, the examiner suggested modifying McDonough with Boushy such that the asserted service locations in McDonough would be replaced with Boushy's gaming machines. But McDonough connects service providers located in call centers with remote customers in different locations. As McDonough explains, the principle problem addressed is: "connecting any customer to any sales and service resource through any access method at any time from any customer location." McDonough, col. 3, lines 57-59. To solve this problem, McDonough's system connects the workstation of a call center employee to a customer who requested help from a remote site. As McDonough explains, this allows McDonough's employees to be located remotely from customers and yet communicate with them electronically. This eliminates the need to for McDonough's call center employees actually to go (e.g., be dispatched) to the physical location of the customers.

Hence, modifying McDonough's virtual call center so that it dispatches service attendants to physical locations in a business establishment (such as gaming machines in a casino) would destroy a principle purpose of the call center, as explicitly stated in McDonough. McDonough would no longer provide service from service agents in a virtual call center to customers at remote locations. Specifically, McDonough would no longer connect "any sales and service resource" to provide service to customers at "any customer location."

The obviousness rejection thus impermissibly modifies McDonough because it would render McDonough unsatisfactory for its intended purpose. Accordingly, McDonough cannot be modified under § 103 to achieve the claimed dispatching system. Claims 15, 16, 37, 38, and 74 are therefore patentable over the cited references for at least this reason.

IV.   There would be no motivation to modify McDonough to achieve the claimed invention. (Claims 3-6, 11, 15, 16, 22, 25-28, 33, 37, 38, 44, 48-51, 62-65, 67, and 72-74)

The deficiency in McDonough described above cannot be cured by resort to additional references. There is a fundamental difference in purpose between McDonough's virtual call center and the claimed dispatching system — a difference that makes any attempt to modify McDonough to achieve the claimed invention untenable. McDonough is simply a call center, not a system for dispatching service attendants throughout a business establishment. McDonough is expressly directed at providing service to customers at *remote* locations in a *virtual* environment. There would have been no motivation to modify McDonough against the expressly taught motivations in that reference.

Furthermore, given its distinct purpose, McDonough's disclosure in the field of call center technology is not analogous art to the claimed dispatching systems. An obviousness rejection using McDonough as a primary reference, therefore, would be motivated only by hindsight.

Because there would have been no motivation to make the proposed combinations, claims 3-6, 11, 15, 16, 22, 25-28, 33, 37, 38, 44, 48-51, 62-65, 67, and 72-74 are patentable over the cited references for at least this reason.

Summary

For the foregoing reasons, appellants believe that the examiner's rejections of claims 1-75 were erroneous, and reversal of his decision is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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1.   A system for providing service to customers at service locations, each service location having a communication device adapted to communicate one or more events pertaining to a service event for a customer at the service location, the system comprising:

        a decisioning system communicatively coupled to the communication devices to receive the events, the decisioning system scheduling a primary service attendant from a plurality of service attendants for servicing each event according to at least a value of the customer at the service location that generated the event;

        a communication system communicatively coupled to the decisioning system to transmit a message to the primary service attendant selected for an event, the message indicating the service location at which the event is to be serviced, where the indicated service location is in a business establishment; and

        a plurality of message receivers, used by the service attendants, the primary service attendant using a message receiver to receive the message from the communication system.

2.   The system of claim 1, wherein the customer value is based on potential revenue generated by the customer.

3.   The system of claim 1, wherein the customer value is based on a theoretical win profile of the customer.

4.   The system of claim 1, wherein the customer value is based on a room rate of a room occupied by the customer.

5.   The system of claim 1, wherein the customer value is based on a room type of a room occupied by the customer.

6.   The system of claim 1, wherein the customer value is based on a number of persons in a party associated with the customer.

7.　　　The system of claim 1, wherein the decisioning system uses a plurality of rules for scheduling the events for service.

8.　　　The system of claim 7, wherein the rules include:
　　　　at least one rule for scheduling events according to an age of the event.

9.　　　The system of claim 7, wherein the rules include:
　　　　at least one rule for scheduling events according to a type of event.

10.　　　The system of 7, wherein the rules include:
　　　　at least one rule for scheduling events according to a location of the service location.

11.　　　The system of claim 7, wherein the rules include:
　　　　at least one rule for scheduling events according to a combination of an age of the event and a value of the customer.

12.　　　The system of claim 7, wherein the rules include:
　　　　at least one rule for selecting a service attendant for servicing an event based on a location of the service location which generated the event and an assigned location of the service attendant.

13.　　　The system of claim 7, wherein the rules include:
　　　　at least one rule for messaging a supervisor of the primary service attendant if the primary service attendant has not completed servicing the event in a certain amount of time.

14.　　　The system of 7, wherein the rules include:
　　　　at least one rule for scheduling events according to an age of the event;
　　　　at least one rule for scheduling events according to a type of event;
　　　　at least one rule for scheduling events according to a location of the service location; and

at least one rule for selecting a service attendant for servicing an event based on a location of the service location which generated the event and an assigned location of the service attendant.

15.   The system of claim 1, wherein the service locations are gaming machines, and the communication devices are interface boards coupled to the gaming machines, which communicate game events to a gaming machine management system.

16.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 15, wherein the gaming machines are slot machines, and the communication devices are interface boards that communicate slot events to the gaming machine management system.

17.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 1, wherein the communication system is a two-way messaging system, whereby the message receivers can transmit and receive messages.

18.   The system of claim 17, wherein:
the primary service attendant can accept or decline to service an event using the two-way message receiver, and wherein:
in response to the primary service attendant declining to service an event, the decisioning system selects a secondary service attendant for servicing the event, and the messaging system transmits a message to the secondary service attendant to service the event.

19.   The system of claim 17, wherein:
the primary service attendant can accept or decline to service an event using the two-way message receiver, and wherein:
in response to the primary service attendant accepting to service an event, the decisioning system establishes the primary service attendant as being unavailable to service another event until the primary service provider completes service of the accepted event.

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20.   The system of claim 1, wherein the decisioning system monitors the time taken to service each event, and responsive to time taken to service an event exceeding a threshold amount, the decisioning system selects an employee to notify of the incomplete service, and instructs the messaging system to transmit a message to the selected employee.

21.   The system of claim 1, further comprising:
> a customer database, communicatively coupled to the decisioning system and containing customer records indicating for each customer a measure of the customer's value and the customer's identification number, the decisioning system receiving from a service location a customer identification number and querying the customer database with the received customer identification number to obtain the measure of the customer's value, the decisioning system scheduling the event for service according to the obtained customer value.

22.   The system of claim 21, wherein each service location includes a customer identification card reader, for reading a customer identification number from a customer identification card.

23.   A system for providing service to customers at service locations, each service location having a communication means for communicating one or more events pertaining to a service event for a customer at the service location, the system comprising:
> a computer implemented decision making means communicatively coupled to the plurality of communication means for receiving the events, the decision making means selecting a primary service attendant from a plurality of service attendants for servicing each event according to at least a value of a customer to be serviced for each event;
> a messaging means communicatively coupled to the decision making means for transmitting a message to the primary service attendant selected for servicing an event, the message indicating the service location at which the event is to be serviced, where the indicated service location is in a business establishment; and

a plurality of message receiving means, used by the service attendants, the primary service attendant using a message receiving means for receiving the message from the messaging means.

24.   The system of claim 23, wherein the customer value is based on potential revenue generated by the customer.

25.   The system of claim 23, wherein the customer value is based on a theoretical win profile of the customer.

26.   The system of claim 23, wherein the customer value is based on a room rate of a room occupied by the customer.

27.   The system of claim 23, wherein the customer value is based on a room type of a room occupied by the customer.

28.   The system of claim 23, wherein the customer value is based on a number of persons in a party associated with the customer.

29.   The system of claim 23, wherein the decision making means includes a plurality of rules for scheduling the events for service.

30.   The system of claim 29, wherein the rules of the decision making means for scheduling events include:
at least one rule for scheduling events according to an age of the event.

31.   The system of claim 29, wherein the rules of the decision making means for scheduling events include:
at least one rule for scheduling events according to a type of event.

32.   The system of claim 29, wherein the rules of the decision making means for scheduling events include:

at least one rule for scheduling events according to a location of the service location.

33.   The system of claim 29, wherein the rules of the decision making means for scheduling events include:

at least one rule for scheduling events according to a combination of an age of the event and the value of the customer.

34.   The system of claim 29, wherein the rules of the decision making means for scheduling events include:

at least one rule for selecting a service attendant for servicing an event based on a location of the service location which generated the event and an assigned location of the service attendant.

35.   The system of claim 29, wherein the rules of the decision making means for scheduling events include:

at least one rule for messaging a supervisor of the primary service attendant if the primary service attendant has not completed servicing the event in a certain amount of time.

36.   The system of claim 29, wherein the rules of the decision making means for scheduling events include:

at least one rule for scheduling events according to an age of the event;

at least one rule for scheduling events according to a type of event;

at least one rule for scheduling events according to a location of the service location; and

at least one rule for selecting a service attendant for servicing an event based on a location of the service location which generated the event and an assigned location of the service attendant.

37.   The system of claim 23, wherein the service locations are gaming machines, and the communication devices are interface boards coupled to the gaming machines, which communicate game events to a gaming machine management system.

38.   (Previously presented) The system of claim 37, wherein the gaming machines are slot machines, and the communication devices are interface boards that communicate slot events to the gaming machine management system.

39.   The system of claim 23, wherein the messaging means is a two-way paging system and the message receiving means are two-way pagers.

40.   The system of claim 39, wherein:
    the primary service attendant can accept or decline to service an event using the two-way message receiver, and wherein:
    in response to the primary service attendant declining to service an event, the decision making means selects a secondary service attendant for servicing the event, and the messaging system transmits a message to the secondary service attendant to service the event.

41.   The system of claim 39, wherein:
    the primary service attendant can accept or decline to service an event using the two-way message receiver, and wherein:
    in response to the primary service attendant accepting to service an event, the decision making means establishes the primary service attendant as being unavailable to service another event until the primary service provider completes service of the accepted event.

42.   The system of claim 23, wherein the decision making means monitors the time taken to service each event, and responsive to time taken to service an event exceeding a threshold amount, the decision making means selects an employee to notify of the incomplete service, and instructs the messaging system to transmit a message to the selected employee.

43.   The system of claim 23, further comprising:
    a customer database, communicatively coupled to the decision making means and containing customer records indicating for each customer a measure of the customer's value and the customer's identification number, the decision

making means receiving from a service location a customer identification number and querying the customer database with the received customer identification number to obtain the measure of the customer's value, the decision making means scheduling the event for service according to the obtained customer value.

44.   The system of claim 43, wherein each service location includes a customer identification card reader, for reading a customer identification number from a customer identification card.

45.   A system for servicing customers at service locations located throughout a business establishment, the system comprising:

    means for transmitting from a service location a message pertaining to an event at the service location and for which a customer at the service location needs service by a service attendant;

    means for receiving the transmitted message;

    means, communicatively coupled to the receiving means, for scheduling the event according to at least the value of the customer;

    means for selecting a first service attendant for servicing the scheduled event; and

    means for transmitting a message to the first service attendant identifying the service location to be serviced for the event, where the identified service location is in the business establishment.

46.   A method of servicing customers at service locations located throughout a business establishment, the method comprising:

    transmitting from a communication device at a service location a message pertaining to an event at the service location and for which a customer at the service location needs service by a service attendant;

    receiving the transmitted message;

    scheduling the event for servicing by a first service attendant according to at least a value of the customer at the service location that generated the event; and

transmitting a message to the first service attendant identifying the service location to
be serviced for the event, where the identified service location is in the
business establishment.

47.   The method of claim 46, further comprising:
receiving from a customer at a service location data identifying the customer, wherein
transmitted message includes the data identifying at least one of a the
customer or the service location; and
scheduling the event for servicing by a first service attendant according to at least a
value of the customer at the service location comprises determining from the
identifying data the value of the customer.

48.   The method of claim 46, wherein the service locations are hotel rooms.

49.   The method of claim 46, wherein the service locations are cruise ship cabins.

50.   The method of claim 46, wherein the service locations are amusement part
facilities.

51.   The method of claim 46, wherein the service locations are restaurant tables.

52.   The method of claim 46, further comprising:
receiving from the first service attendant a message declining to service an event;
selecting a second service attendant to service the event; and
transmitting a message to the second service attendant to service the event.

53.   The method of claim 46, wherein:
receiving from the first service attendant a message accepting to service an event; and
establishing the first service attendant as being unavailable to service another event
until the first service provider completes service of the accepted event.

54. The method of claim 53, wherein the message from the first service attendant is transmitted from a communication device fixed at the service location.

55. The method of claim 46, further comprising:
monitoring the time taken to service the event; and
responsive to the time taken to service an event exceeding a threshold amount,
transmitting a message to another employee to notify of the incomplete
service.

56. The method of claim 46, further comprising:
monitoring an aggregate performance criteria for servicing the events; and
responsive the aggregate performance criteria exceeding a threshold amount,
transmitting a message to supervisor.

57. The method of claim 46, further comprising:
responsive to not receiving, within a predetermined amount of time, an acceptance
from the first service attendant of the message to service the event,
transmitting a message to a second service attendant to service the event.

58. The method of claim 46, wherein scheduling the event for servicing further comprises:
scheduling the event for servicing using a plurality of rules.

59. The method of claim 46, wherein scheduling the event for servicing further comprises:
scheduling the event for servicing according to an age of the event.

60. The method of claim 46, wherein scheduling the event for servicing further comprises:
scheduling the event for servicing according to a type of event.

61.   The method of claim 46, wherein the customer value is based on potential revenue generated by the customer.

62.   The method of claim 46, wherein the customer value is based on a theoretical win profile of the customer.

63.   The method of claim 46, wherein the customer value is based on a room rate of a room occupied by the customer.

64.   The method of claim 46, wherein the customer value is based on a room type of a room occupied by the customer.

65.   The method of claim 46, wherein the customer value is based on a number of persons in a party associated with the customer.

66.   The method of claim 46, wherein scheduling the event for servicing further comprises:

       scheduling the event for servicing according to a location of the service location.

67.   The method of claim 46, wherein scheduling the event for servicing further comprises:

       scheduling the event for servicing according to a combination of an age of the event and a value of the customer.

68.   The method of claim 46, wherein scheduling the event for servicing further comprises:

       selecting a service attendant for servicing an event based on a location of the service location which generated the event and an assigned location of the service attendant.

69.   (Previously presented) The method of claim 46, wherein scheduling the event for servicing further comprises:

messaging a supervisor of the first service attendant if the first service attendant has
not completed servicing the event in a certain amount of time.

70. The method of claim 46, wherein scheduling the event for servicing further
comprises:
scheduling the event for servicing according to, an age of the event, a type of event, a
location of the service location; and
selecting a service attendant for servicing an event based on a location of the service
location which generated the event and an assigned location of the service
attendant.

71. The method of claim 46, further comprising:
receiving from the service location a customer identification number;
querying a customer database with the received customer identification number to
obtain the measure of the customer's value; and
scheduling the event for service according to the obtained customer value.

72. The method of claim 46, wherein each service location includes a customer
identification card reader, for reading a customer identification number from a customer
identification card.

73. The method of claim 46, wherein scheduling the event further comprises
scheduling the event using scheduling rules pertaining to an amount of time an event has been
pending, an evaluation of the customer's value, and a type of the event.

74. The method of claim 46, wherein the service locations are gaming machines, and
the service location events include a jackpot at a gaming machine.

75. A system for providing service to customers at service locations, wherein each
service location has a communication device adapted to communicate one or more events
pertaining to the status of a customer at the service location, the system comprising:

a decisioning system for scheduling the events for service, by receiving the events
from the communication devices and using a plurality of rules to select a
primary service attendant for servicing each event including at least one rule
to schedule an event based on a value of the customer, to produce a
periodically updated event service schedule;

a communication system for transmitting a message to the primary service attendant
selected for an event, by way of a two-way communication network, to
produce a message indicating to the primary service attendant the service
location at which the event is to be serviced, where the indicated service
location is in a business establishment; and

a plurality of message receivers, each service attendant having one of the message
receivers, for receiving the messages from the communication system, by way
of the two-way communication network, to produce to the service attendant to
message.